

Community Preservation Act Committee (CPAC)
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 8, 2009

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Peter Jessop at 7:03 PM. Town Room, Town Hall

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Briony Angus, Denise Barberet, Louis Greenbaum, Peter Jessop, Chair, Ellen Kosmer, Vince O'Connor, Vice Chair, Mary Streeter, Clerk, Stan Ziomek

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Vladimir Morales

STAFF / OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Sonia Aldrich, Comptroller, Diana Stein, Select Board liaison, Jonathan Tucker, Dave Ziomek, Sonia Sofield, Carol Gray, Bob Wellman, Alan Powell, Roxy Schneider, 4 others

AGENDA

- financial overview (same as last meeting)
- Housing
- Historic
- Open Space
- Adding an administrative amount
- Discussion to include the Public Hearing
- Minutes
- Schedule future meetings
- Adjourn

DISCUSSION

Financial Status

\$218,168.58 is carried forward from last year. Expected surcharge from this year is approximately \$350,000 with an estimated State match of \$122,000. After subtracting debt service for Plum Brook Recreation Area and the Kimball House we should have \$579,335.18 to spend this year. Vince asked for information on any projects we have passed that cannot go forward in the Town Counsel's opinion. Sonia Aldrich said it is in the works. Vince then asked about the \$81,000 for acquisition of the Main Street lots. Jonathan Tucker said the Historical Commission voted to resubmit the grant and a meeting with the owners is scheduled. Denise asked about the \$90,000 to be privately raised.

Affordable Housing

Peter announced that the Housing Partnership Committee is not requesting any more funds than the 10% required set aside. Vince said there was one proposal that did have a housing component. Peter said the Housing Partnership Committee hasn't weighed in on that yet.

Historic Preservation

Jonathan Tucker said work on headstone restoration in the West Cemetery is two thirds of the way complete. The stone façade of the **Town Tomb** is separating and needs reconstruction - \$24,500 and **ironwork** (fencing around the Cutler & Dickinson plots, the tomb door) - \$24,500. Debt service for the **Kimball House** is approximately \$25,600 and for **Town Hall** is \$44,250. **Archival documents preservation** is \$20,000.

Hills Landscape Park was discussed. It would cost \$81,000 in CPA funds plus a State Grant. Denise commented that Town Meeting needs to consider it again since some people may have voted for this without the knowledge that the owners expected an additional \$90,000 to be raised privately. Mary agreed with Denise stressing the importance of openness in the process.

Mr. Tucker informed us that **Jones Library** submitted a request for several hundred thousand dollars. After deliberating, the Historical Commission is proposing that \$25,000 be made available for studies for 2 projects: 1) Special Collections Climate Control. That's an absolute priority. Special Collections is a small area – 3 rooms; and 2) There are roof leaks whose source and extent need to be identified.

Civil War Tablets – 6 large marble stone tablets from the Grand Army of the Republic, a Civil War veterans organization, need cleaning and restoration. They were originally installed in Town Hall and are currently being stored at Ruxton – \$45,000.

North Congregational Church has requested money to repair a roof leak -- \$6150. This building was erected in 1826. The Town gets back a historic preservation.

Mr. Tucker said he is awaiting an opinion from Town Counsel on funding \$30,000 for **Interpretive Signs for a Literary Trail** project. \$20,000 is requested for a **Mass. Historical Commission Survey and planning grant** match to complete the Town's Historic Resources Inventory partly done in the 70's, which now needs to be updated and put on the GIS system. Additional funds requested are \$10,000 for a **Historic Register Nomination** and \$15,000 for **Historic Barns inventory and assessment**. The total for Historic Preservation requests is \$371,000.

The committee had many questions about the various projects. Vince asked whether there were any unexpended amounts that could be used for cemetery projects. Peter wondered if the Historical Commission wasn't persuaded that the other requests for the library were important. The possibility of using the federal Stimulus Package was discussed. Jonathan Tucker said \$13.5 million in projects that are ready to go in 3 stages from 6 months to 2.5 years was involved. Peter asked if we were likely to have an update on that by Town Meeting. Mr. Tucker said yes. Louis commented that a Gazette article quoted the Town Manager as saying library window replacement would be very expensive. Questions were raised about whether any work done on an HVAC system would be maintenance. Mr. Tucker said he would ask Town Counsel. Vince asked if the West Cemetery Town Tomb Engineering Study costing \$5000 was done. Mr. Tucker said completion of that study would precede this work. Peter asked where the amount \$24,500 came from. Mr. Tucker said \$25,000 requires a full bid process. Ellen requested more information on the Civil War tablets.

Open Space

Dave Ziomek discussed a memo on Status of Open Space Projects. He said #1 -- Signs for Town and School Fields is something Town Counsel has concerns about. There is no problem with the appraisals and surveys. The Tietjen APR Project will close by 12/31/08. Mary expressed concern that the \$11,737.90 for a riding ring might be a problem if it's not on land purchased with CPA funds as required by the CPA. Dave Ziomek said he would ask Linda Chalfant.

Dave distributed a map and discussed the importance of appraisal and survey money – costing \$5,000-7,000 per appraisal. Surveys run even higher. He pointed out and discussed two APR/Conservation projects for this spring, The **Johnson property** on South East Street and the **Olendzki property** on Station Road. For the Johnson property, a conservation restriction will be sought costing \$90,000 in CPA funds and \$60,000 from a grant. The specifics for the Olendzki property are still being discussed. These properties contain many rare species of plants. For both it is expected to cost \$190,000 for a total of 28 acres. Dave Ziomek explained that the Town expects to take title to part of the Olendzki parcel. We would own it, control it, and manage it. The Johnson parcel is similar to an APR. The Johnsons would own it and pay taxes on it, while the Town would have a conservation restriction and development rights.

South Amherst Conservation Association is seeking between \$150,000 and \$250,000 to purchase land on South East Street for a combined Open Space/Affordable Housing/Recreation project. (SACA) and the Town have been informed that Mr. Nielsen, who owns the property, is now a willing seller. Sonia Sofield from SACA distributed a map and photos and discussed the merits of the project. This land is near the Bike Trail, farms, other conservation areas and has the only public access to the Brickyard Conservation Area. SACA would look for money from conservation trusts and \$40,000 in private funds. Carol Gray read a statement from Betsy and Chad Johnson saying that they wish the old Rock Farm would take precedence over their funding. Peter asked to see copies of Mr. Nielsen's communications.

Roxy Schneider, who lives near South East Street, wondered if an organic farm similar to that in North Amherst could be created. Peter referred her to Dave Ziomek to discuss it further.

Sonia Aldrich said John Musante asked her to propose \$5000 for legal for restrictions, \$2000 for CPA Coalition dues, and \$10,000 for staff support for a total of \$17,000 in **administrative expenses**.

Kingston Letter

Diana Stein said the Select Board wants to know if we'd like to write a letter to Therese Murray concerning the expansion of the CPA law to include green energy projects. It was agreed to discuss this at another time.

FOLLOW-UP

Dave Ziomek, Jonathan Tucker, and members of the South Amherst Conservation Association will come back with answers to tonight's questions about their proposals.

Sonia Aldrich will advertise the Public Hearing and provide more specific information on the administrative expenses request.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 PM. Motion by Louis 2nd by Stan. Voted unanimously.

NEXT MEETING:

Public Hearing followed by a regular meeting, Thursday, February 5, 2009 at 6:00 PM in the Town Room, 2nd Floor, Town Hall if it is available.

DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED

- Agenda
- Financial Status of CPAC Funds, 1 page
- FY10 CPA Request from Housing Partnership/Fair Housing Committee, 1 page
- Fiscal Year 2010 Historic Preservation Projects 1/7/09, 1page
- FY10 Preliminary Funding Request from David Ziomek 12/31/08, 2 pages
- 2 Letters from Kevin R. Donovan, Town Administrator, Kingston, MA 12/10/08 & 12/11/08, 2 pages
- Minutes 11/20/08, 3 pages
- Proposals for CPA Funding from Bonnie Isman 12/17/08
- Proposal by the South Amherst Conservation Association for CPAC funds for purchase of land on South East Street from 12/19/08, 2 pages
- Status of Historic Preservation CPA Projects 1/8/09, 3 pages
- Open Space Accounts – Project Status from David Ziomek 11/17/08, 1 page
- Draft – CPA related Articles Discussed by Town Meeting from Mary Streeter, 5 pages

Respectfully Submitted by: Mary Streeter, Clerk

Minutes Approved: February 26, 2009